

Grace Episcopal Church

Scripture 202 – September 28, 2011 – Session 4

Origins and Development of the Bible

Formation of Hebrew Bible: Introduction, pp.55-62

Transmission of the Great Works of God as witnessed by the People of God:

1. Oral & Storytelling Stage
2. The Writing Stage
3. Establishing the Canon

Oral Stage:

Form:

- ⇒ Sagas and Songs about ancestral heroes, tribal leaders, military victories
- ⇒ Prayers and confessions to express feeling toward God
- ⇒ Proverbs and legal sayings to transmit social and religious values
- ⇒ Over centuries, traditions developed, Hebrew culture established, storytellers refine the stories.
- ⇒ Most not all passed down through the telling of the story, retelling of story
 - Genesis 12 – 51 – Sagas told and retold then written down
 - Sayings in Proverbs, Psalms, Job, Song of Deborah (Judges 5)

Written Stage:

- ⇒ Few books in Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) are product of single author.
- ⇒ Lots of oral and written tradition has gone into what we see today

The 3 Parts:

Torah (Law)(Pentateuch): Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy

- ⇒ Documentary Hypothesis : How did this come together?
 - J = Yahwist - ?1000-?900 BCE/BC
 - E= Elohist - ? 900-800
 - D= Deuteronomy - ? 600
 - P = Priest - ? 500 – 400
- ⇒ All came together around 400's

Nevi'im (Prophets)

Form: 2 parts

- Former Prophets
 - Books of Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings
 - Elijah and Elisha
 - ? 600 = first edition ? 500 = Deuteronomic History
- Latter Prophets
 - Several authors and editors – Introduction p 58

Pre Exile (750 – 587 BCE)	Exile (587-538)	Post Exile (538- 400)
Amos	Isaiah additions	Haggai
Hosea	Jeremiah	Zechariah
Isaiah 1 –39	Ezekiel	Joel
Micah		Obadiah
Zephaniah		Jonah
Nahum		Micah
Habbakkuk		

- Note the chart in Fant p 59 ? 700 – 400

Ketuvim (Writings)

- 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra Nehemiah, Ruth, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Lamentations, Daniel
- 500s – 100s
- A lot written before the Exile most came together in the form we know post Exile

Canon

Torah: 400 BCE/BC held to be authoritative in all Jewish communities

Prophets: Former for sure, Latter later; with Torah authoritative by 200s BCE

Writings: Undefined for centuries; toward end of 1st century AD seemed to be authoritative. 90 AD – Meeting in Jamnia, How can faith survive without the Temple? Although did not have official authority – assembly of scholars – created a list – not fully excepted until end of 300s AD. Criteria for selection?: conformity, inspiration, Hebrew Language, wide spread use. No clear for sure.

Formation of the Christian Bible, Introduction, pp 62 – 73

Beginnings

- ⇒ Early Christians accepted Hebrew Scriptures as authoritative. When Christianity separated from Judaism, the Jewish canon was NOT closed.
- ⇒ Septuagint was Greek translation = Hebrew bible + Apocrypha
 - Protestant Reformation in 16th century were rejected by reformers
 - RCC declared works equally authoritative with other OT writings
- ⇒ Early Christians began to recognize their writings as Scripture
 - Known as New Testament

Oral Stage

- ⇒ Oral materials that formed Gospels circulated orally for decades.
- ⇒ Because of “end time expectancy” no need to write it down.
- ⇒ Belief that oral was more reliable than written

Writing Stage

Circumstances that led to writing down:

- ⇒ Need to preserve a record of the eyewitnesses to Jesus' life
- ⇒ End time did not come soon enough
- ⇒ As church spread, knowledgeable church leaders consulted to solve disputes and this was written
- ⇒ Number of converts increased, documents written for formation of the faith.

Note figure 3.4

Other books at end of 1st century through the end of second.

1 & 2 Clement, Epistle of Barnabas, Didache, the Shepherd of Hermas, the Gospel of Peter, the Apocalypse of Peter, the Gospel of Thomas, & the Acts of Peter.

Canon

- ⇒ Letters of Paul gathered and considered authoritative
- ⇒ Mid – 2nd Century Luke-Acts separated and 4 Gospels were collected
- ⇒ Next accepted Acts, 1 John, 1 Peter
- ⇒ Book of Revelation ??
- ⇒ Hebrews accepted in the East and rejected in West
- ⇒ Marcion canon believed 12 disciples had corrupted the teachings of Jesus. His was rejected.
 - 367 AD, Bishop Athanasius accept 27 books in NT
 - 393 AD, Council of Hippo accepted
 - 397 AD, Council of Carthage accepted
- ⇒ Not formal acceptance but the Christian canon was determined by gradual use and acceptance of religious community.
- ⇒ Criteria for acceptance
 - Part of the tradition of the apostles
 - Orthodoxy
 - Antiquity, written during the apostolic age
 - Inspiration
 - Widespread use in the Church

Process of translation